

The Man From Home

A Novelization of the Play of the Same Name

By Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson

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(Continued from last week.)

"Pardon, m'sieu, the gentleman, he wish to speak to you."
Horace whirled in an angry flash. "What gentleman?" he demanded, and Pike regarded him calmly. "I thought from your looks," he proceeded quietly, "you might be an American."

Horace planted himself squarely before his interrogator.

"Are you speaking to me?" he demanded haughtily.

"I shouldn't be surprised," said Pike gently. "Ain't you an American?"

"I happen to have been born in the States," replied Horace aggressively, and Pike smiled quizzically.

"Well, that was luck," he commented, and as Horace turned again to go he said: "Hold on a minute! I'm looking for some Americans here, and I expect you know 'em—boy and girl named Simpson?"

Horace flushed deeply to the roots of his hair.

"Is there any possibility you mean Granger-Simpson?" he asked, with elaborate sarcasm, but this was lost on Daniel.

"No, sir; just plain Simpson. Granger's their middle name. That's for old Jed Granger, grandfather on their mother's side. I want to see 'em both, but it's the girl I'm really looking for."

"Will you be good enough to state any possible reason why Miss Granger-Simpson should see you?" and Pike started in genuine astonishment.

"Reason?" he reiterated. "Why, yes, I'm her guardian!"

The effect of this simple statement was terrifying. Ethel recoiled dizzily and was supported by Mme. de Champligny. The earl rose to his feet, and Horace staggered back.

"What!" he cried.

"Yes, sir," went on Pike—"Daniel Voorhees Pike, attorney at law, Kokomo, Ind."

Horace fell back from him in horrified amazement.

"I shall ask her," he began weakly and shamefacedly, "if she will consent to an interview."

Pike looked at him in amazement in his turn.

"Interview?" he said. "Why, I want to talk to her!"

Hawcastle, with some of his finer feelings aroused, picked up his sister-in-law with his eyes, much as a clever hostess picks up her feminine guests at dinner, and arose, turning to Ethel.

"This shall make no difference to us, my child," he said, and turning sharply, took Lady Creech by the arm and left the terrace. Pike looked at Horace pityingly.

"Don't you understand?" he said. "I'm her guardian!"

For a fleeting instant Horace stared at him and then dropped his chin and walked away.

"I shall never hold up my head again," he said.

The sudden horror of the revelation that Horace had drawn forth bore down upon Ethel's mind with a crushing weight.

To her artificialized understanding the disgrace was more than she could ever hope to bear, and Horace's expressed thought that he should never be able to hold up his head again was but a vivification of her own.

Surely it would have been bad enough, she told herself, if this fearful thing had come upon them privately, but to have it appear in the full light of day and in the very hearing of the family was too cruel.

And with an inward groan she leaned for a moment against the terrace wall where the countess had left her. When she first awoke to the realization that she had done this, she had been in a state of oppression in several ways, came back to her with a rush, and she decided to see this awful man and give him to understand that he must go away at once and never insult her again by his uncouth and vulgar presence. Such business as had to be transacted could be done through an intermediary.

With a bracing of her spirit she stepped forward resolutely and came up close behind Pike as he stood with drooping jaw gazing in perplexity after the retreating Horace. Ethel cast a look of loathing upon the straight back of the guardian of her peace and ground her little boot heel into the stone flagging. She glanced up and saw that the common German was looking at Pike with grave sympathy and even understanding, and instantly she hated him for it. Then she saw him take his cap from the obsequious Mariano and turn away. When he had gone she said in a low voice:

"I am Miss Granger-Simpson."

CHAPTER X.

THE HUMILIATION.

INSTANTLY Pike turned with a little twist of his lank body and half lifted his hand as if he expected a blow. Then his arm dropped again, and he stood looking at her in calm and interested fashion. As he stared his expression changed to one of mingled tenderness and pride, and when he spoke there was a world of pathos in his voice.

"Why," he said in a low, astonished tone—"why, I knew your pa from the time I was a little boy till he died, and I looked up to him more'n I ever looked up to anybody in my life, but I never thought he'd have a girl like you. He'd be mighty proud if he could see you now."

She turned from him in a smothered

rage and then faced him again with cold disapproval in her tone.

"Perhaps it will be as well if we avoid personal allusions," she said resentfully. "This man should have no opportunity for bringing up those vulgar, half forgotten family reminiscences if she could help it. He smiled a trifle wearily."

"I don't just see how that's possible," he answered, and she waved her hand indignantly.

"Will you please sit down?" she said, and Pike made an awkward bow.

"Yes, ma'am," he replied meekly, with the faintest accent on the last word, and obediently took the chair that Horace had vacated so precipitously. She shuddered at the word he had used and glanced nervously at the hat he was holding in his hands.

"Are—are you really my guardian?" she asked at last, with a trace of heat.

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in the back lot and give him a thrashing he won't forget to the day of his death!"

She was about to answer when from a distance came the roll of drums and then the sound of a bugle. The sounds came from afar off, as if below the cliff.

They both stopped to listen. Then the servants came running, with Mariano at their head. They rushed to the wall and leaned over, all excitement. Mariano turned to call to them over his shoulder:

"The bandit of Russia! The soldiers think he is hidden in a grotto under these cliffs!"

As he spoke Almeric ran down the steps with a shotgun in his hand and made for the steps leading down the face of the cliff. Pike turned